

WHO ARE THE SCHISMATICS!

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APPEAL

TO THE MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

AGAINST THE

SCHISM

OF

ANTI-ABOLITION.

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## WHO ARE THE SCHISMATICS ?

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"That there might be no schism in the body."—*St. Paul.*

"Of what nature this schism at Corinth was, is still more clearly determined, by the words that immediately follow. 'Now this I say,'—this is the schism of which I speak, you are divided into separate parties; some of you speaking in favor of one, and some of another preacher. Who, then, does not see, that the schism for which the apostle here reproves the Corinthians, is neither more nor less, than splitting into several parties, as they gave the preference to one or another preacher?"—*Rev. J. Wesley.*

"Schism is properly a division among those who stand in one connection or fellowship. Dr. Campbell shows that the word schism, in Scripture, does not usually signify an *open* separation, but that men may be guilty of schism by such an alienation of *affection* from their brethren as violates the internal union in the hearts of Christians, though there be no error in doctrine, nor separation from communion."—*Rev. R. Watson.*

### WHAT IS ABOLITIONISM ?

We answer, the FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE of Abolitionism, is thus expressed by our Conference in 1780.

"The Conference acknowledges that slavery is contrary to THE LAWS OF GOD, MAN, AND NATURE, and hurtful to society; CONTRARY TO THE DICTATES OF CONSCIENCE AND PURE RELIGION; and doing what we would not that others shou'd do unto us; and they pass their disapprobation upon ALL our friends who keep slaves, and they advise their freedom."—*Min. Conf. 1780.*

The OBJECT and MEASURES of the abolitionists in the M. E. Church are fully described in the following language, taken also, from the minutes of Conference for 1785, the next year after our church was organized :

“ We do hold in the DEEPEST ABHORRENCE the PRACTICE OF SLAVERY, and SHALL NOT CEASE to SEEK its DESTRUCTION, by all wise and prudent means.”

Our object, therefore, is the “ DESTRUCTION of SLAVERY by all *wise and prudent* means.” There are now more than seventy thousand of our own brethren and sisters at the South, held in slavery, a kind of slavery too, which Wesley pronounced, “ the vilest that ever saw the sun.” But now, thousands of Methodists, including class-leaders, local and travelling preachers, in our church at the South and southwest, are *Slaveholders*.

We wish to see the Discipline enforced, and its measures carried out for the “ EXTIRPATION of the great evil of Slavery.” We wish that rule in our Discipline which forbids the “ intention” of enslaving a human being to be no longer a dead letter, as our brethren at the South now, themselves, tell us it is. From the very first, our Discipline has asked the following question :—

“ What shall be done for the EXTIRPATION of the great evil of Slavery ?”

But of late, many of our ministers and members, both at the North and South, have taken the ground, that slaveholding is not, in itself, a moral evil ; and accordingly, at the session of the Georgia Conference, in 1837, the following preamble and resolutions were adopted unanimously, Bishop Morris in the chair.

“ Whereas, there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of *slavery*—and, whereas, the said clause has been *perverted* by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*.

"Therefore, Resolved, that it is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference that slavery, as it exists in the United States, IS NOT A MORAL EVIL."

A similar resolution was also adopted by the South Carolina Conference at its last session, and the Baltimore Conference, in 1837, adopted a report declaring, in substance, that the slave trade is not, in itself, a moral evil.

Such, then, is the difference between us and our opponents. While we are striving to regain the ground taken by Wesley, and the early Methodist ministers in this country, in relation to this "great evil," our opposers practically say that *they* do not agree with those holy men who organized the Methodist E. Church, when they said, "we do hold in the DEEPEST ABHORRENCE the PRACTICE of *slavery*." It may be true that some of them condemn slavery in the *abstract*, but "our fathers" condemned it in PRACTICE, and instead of opposing those who sought its abolition, they opposed SLAVERY, and sought its "DESTRUCTION by all wise and prudent means."

And now, what is there in the Methodist Discipline to prevent our ministers and members from taking the same views of slavery, which were advocated by Wesley, Clark, Watson, and the Wesleyan Conference in England? What is there in Methodism to prevent us from advocating the views of those holy men, on this subject, who organized the M. E. Church in 1784? What is there in Wesleyan Methodism to prevent us from carrying out the measures prepared in our Discipline forty years ago, for the extirpation of this great evil, when it made it the duty of our members and ministers to "CONTINUE these measures from year to year till the desired end be accomplished?"

Let us now enquire, what the abolitionists in the M. E. Church have done, to expose them to the charge of schism, which President Fisk and a few others have so openly and solemnly preferred against them. Have they ever refused to *fellowship* their anti-abolition brethren? Have they ever refused to admit an anti-abolitionist into the Church on ac-

count of his anti-abolitionism? Have they ever refused to invite a brother to preach on the account of his opposition to abolition? Have they ever refused to extend to their anti-abolition brethren, the usual courtesies common among Christians of the same faith? Have they ever EXCLUDED their anti-abolition brethren from their pulpits? Have they ever passed resolutions requiring pledges of them, not to lecture against abolition? Have they ever passed extra-judicial CENSURES upon them, in relation to matters purely cognizable by the Discipline of the Church? Have they ever attempted to MONOPOLIZE one of the official organs of the Church, through which to oppose anti-abolitionism? Has any abolitionist, having charge of a circuit, ever OFFICIALLY ADVISED a preacher under him not to invite an anti-abolitionist to preach or pray in any of the churches on the circuit? And when any such preacher did invite an anti-abolitionist to preach or pray, was any abolitionist ever known to censure him for it?

None of these things have we done. *But every one of them, and more, have been done by anti-abolitionists.* And yet, they are the men to charge us with *schism*!!

Let us particularize.

#### NEW TEST FOR MEMBERSHIP.

We know a brother, who was refused admission into full membership in the M. E. Church, and for which no reason could be assigned, except his having circulated Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery.

Pres. Fisk, referring to the abolitionists in the M. E. Church, and speaking of the *act* of the last General Assembly, by which that body *cut off* a number of its lower judicatories, who were supposed to be guilty of some errors, and after stating that the General Assembly answers in authority to our General Conference, adds:—" *I do not say this could not be done with us.*"

It is true, he thinks such a process a hazardous experiment, involving ruinous effects, and of uncertain issue. But, "he does not say it could *not* be done with us." Nor can any one doubt, who has read what has recently appeared in the Christian Advocate and Journal upon this subject lately, but that, the opinion so cautiously hinted at by President Fisk, is gaining ground among the more prominent anti-abolitionists; the plain English of which is, that the abolitionists may be cut off from the Church, *en masse*, and abolition made a disqualification for membership in the M. E. Church. Indeed, if the inquisitorial process is carried out, which has been begun in the New York Conference, on this subject, it may not be long before there will be more than "*one* condition required of all who desire admission into the M. E. Church," and our ministers and members, instead of being required to renounce slavery, will be required to renounce abolitionism, or be expelled the Church.

#### PROSCRIPTION.

The new rule in our Discipline for the trial of superannuated preachers, out of the bounds of the Conference to which they belong, was talked of in this city, before the session of the General Conference by which it was passed, and with particular reference to the bearing it might have upon the editor of Zion's Watchman. Nay, more, we can prove, that one of the delegates from the New York Conference, immediately after the adoption of that rule by the General Conference, was heard to say, "Now, we've got a *trap* for La Roy Sunderland."

A noted anti-abolitionist has made not less than two successive, but ineffectual attempts to procure from another Conference a vote of censure or excommunication, against an abolitionist, founded on statements made in connection with this controversy; and were the particulars of those cases to be laid before the public, we believe the charges which were preferred, and the means used to sustain them, would be set down by every candid mind, as forming a series

of combined unmixed persecution, alike unparalleled for its severity and injustice, at least, in the annals of the Methodist E. Church.

The abolitionists, as a class, have, from the beginning, been most egregiously misrepresented and injured through the columns of a paper, which is the common property of us all, and during the whole of this time, they have been denied an equal privilege of defending themselves through the same medium.

In some places abolitionists are not invited, nor permitted to take a part in prayer and social religious meetings, purely on account of their being abolitionists. They are indirectly blamed for attending meetings, and censured if they stay away.

Anti-abolition ministers refuse to ask abolitionists to preach in their pulpits, or to speak or pray in a prayer meeting. Nay, they have used their influence and official authority to prevent the ministers who are under them from inviting abolitionists to pray or preach in their pulpits, and they have *censured* them for doing so. A board of trustees have passed a resolution requesting the preacher in charge not to invite any known abolitionist to preach in any of the churches on the circuit; and when an abolitionist has been invited to preach in one of those churches, *extraordinary* measures have been used to PREVENT it. And when, more than two years since, an abolitionist preached in a certain Methodist church, a *famous* anti-abolitionist, a man, too, who was once expelled from the M. E. Church for —, was heard to say, immediately after the sermon, “that fellow shall never preach here again,” or words to this effect.

On some circuits there is an understanding between a few anti-abolitionists and the ministers, that no abolitionist shall be invited to preach in any of the churches; and accordingly, abolition brethren, when present, at meetings held by those preachers, are never invited either to speak or pray. They are openly and publicly slighted in the face of noonday, and all this because they are abolitionists. How far such *pro-*

*scription* is chargeable upon anti-abolitionists, as a class, we do not pretend to say, but that the above facts are true, to some extent, we do know, and can prove, by giving names, places, and dates, if necessary, and much more than we have named or referred to under this head.

Here, then, is SCHISM—*real, practical* SCHISM! A kind of schism, too, which is known and approved by those who have had so much to say lately in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* for the purpose of fixing the “crime of schism” upon the abolitionists.

We have no doubt but that the appointments of preachers have been fixed and changed merely on account of their being abolitionists. Nor have we any doubt but measures are desired if not contemplated, by which the abolitionists in our Church may be crushed at a blow, whatever may be the consequences to the Church, or to the world.

#### EXTRA-JUDICIAL CENSURES.

How often have we been accused of extra-judicial measures against two of our bishops? Why, it has often been asked, why don't you prefer charges against them, and have them tried according to Discipline? And those ask these questions who, themselves, know, that we have never thought our bishops guilty of any crime, and they further know, that, for the acts of their administration of which complaint has been made, there is no rule in our Discipline under which they could now be tried, were we disposed to bring them to trial.

But look at the charges of our opponents. One reports us through the columns of our official paper, as having inveighed against our Discipline, a crime for which one is liable to be expelled from the Church. Another reports us as having commenced a revolution to divide the Church. Another, that we are opposed to the regular authorities of the Church, and as having formally and



publicly renounced Methodism. Another publicly charges some of us, with having left the regular work, and boldly takes it upon himself to pronounce, virtually, a sentence of EXCISION upon a brother, without a regular charge, trial, judge or jury. Nay, he declares, that "those who *permit* Mr. Scott to preach, to administer baptism or the Lord's Supper, or to perform the marriage ceremony, are VIOLATORS of the rules of their Church, and are held accountable to their Annual Conference for their DISORDERLY conduct"!!!

Was the like ever heard of! An able, pious, and popular minister, in the Methodist Episcopal Church, without a Disciplinary charge against his moral, Christian, or ministerial character, without a trial before a committee, or the Conference of which he has been for some fifteen or twenty years an acceptable and useful member, proclaimed by one of his peers in *another* Conference, through our official paper, as an ecclesiastical outlaw—"NOT ALLOWED TO EXERCISE *his peculiar functions, nor even to preach among us*"!!!! And this is the Methodism in defence of which our official press has been made to groan lately, and column after column filled, in the paper which is the common property of us all, to give publicity to these EXTRA-JUDICIAL SENTENCES OF CONDEMNATION!

#### REFUSAL OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP.

Now, we ask, what Christian fellowship have some of our anti-abolition brethren for us, while they refuse us the courtesies common to Christians, and especially, those common to Methodists and Methodist ministers? They have refused us the privilege of preaching the Gospel in their pulpits. Were we to become SLAVE-HOLDERS, probably the pulpits of the M. E. churches in this city would be opened to us, without any difficulty, as the following facts will show.

The Rev. George Storrs, a local elder in good and regular standing in the M. E. Church, happening to be in this city on the 11th of March, 1838, was invited by one of our ministers on the west circuit, to preach for him on the afternoon of that day in the Duane street church. Without any special efforts to circulate intelligence of the expectation that brother Storrs would preach that afternoon, a much larger congregation than usual was in attendance there at the hour for meeting. Without attempting to detail all the circumstances attending the *extraordinary measures* taken by the Rev. C. W. C., Rev. J. F. N., and others to PREVENT brother Storrs from preaching, it may be sufficient to say, they were successful, and he was PREVENTED from preaching that afternoon, and had to content himself with a seat in the altar, while hundreds went away from the church, not only disappointed, but deeply *grieved* by what had taken place.

But the principal incident remains to be told. Before that congregation was dismissed, they were informed that "brother Smith, from the South, would preach in John street, that evening." That brother Smith is a local minister in our Church and a SLAVEHOLDER. Facts by scores could be narrated, to show that most of our brethren, who are "as much opposed to slavery as any body," are, nevertheless, more opposed to abolition than they are to the "great evil of slavery." Indeed, what can be more evident? Slaveholders come and go among us without rebuke. They are invited and received to our pulpits (of this we do not now complain) while abolitionists, who are in good and regular standing in the Church, are, by anti-abolitionists, refused the privilege of participating in the exercises even of a prayer meeting. Nay, they have refused us the privilege of assisting in the devotions of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. They have refused us the privilege of participating with hem in the devotions peculiar to funeral occasions. They

have PROHIBITED our own brethren from *inviting* us to pray, publicly, in the house of God, and censured them for not complying with such a prohibition. They have refused us the hand in exchanging the common civilities of the brotherhood, and even to speak to us when we have addressed them, merely, as we believe, because we were abolitionists. And when speaking of us in their public communications, instead of the common forms of address, which have obtained among us from the beginning of Methodism, it is "*Mr. A.*" "*Mr. B.*" "*that writer,*" "*that fellow,*" &c. &c.

Hence we say, from the above, and other similar facts, which might be named, it is as plain as day light, that a disposition prevails among our opponents to CRUSH us. Their motto seems to be, "*Death to abolition !*" "*No fellowship for abolitionists !*"

But when, let us ask, when were any of our opponents ever treated by abolitionists in this way? When the Rev. S. Olin, attended the session of the New England Conference, in 1836, SLAVEHOLDER as he was, he was invited to preach, and the Conference requested a copy of his sermon for publication. And when the Rev. N. Bangs, one of the most inveterate and determined opposers which abolition ever had, attended the two last sessions of the same Conference, though many believed his principal object in being there, was to prefer charges against one of its members, was he treated as he and his anti-abolition brethren have treated us for two years past? No. The abolitionists, as deeply as they believe their opponents have misrepresented and injured them, have never withheld Christian fellowship from them on this account.

Now, we ask, is there no "schism," no "alienation of affection," in this treatment which we are constantly receiving at the hand of our brethren? Is this treatment brotherly? Is it Christian-like? Is it Methodistical? Is it the better way to heal a division, when one is once begun? Or are such measures calculated to prevent "schism in the body?"

Members and Ministers of the Methodist E. Church ! will you, can you, approve of such measures as these ? What, let us ask, what have your brethren done, who are called abolitionists, to deserve such treatment as this ? Is there any Discipline for this proscription ? Any thing peculiar in Methodism for this withholding of fellowship from brethren who oppose slavery ?

Is it a relic of Wesleyanism to spurn abolitionists and fellowship **SLAVERY** ? And while we conscientiously cling to the Discipline and the church of which we are members, and extend the arms of our affection to those who attempt to crush us, are we to be denounced and posted in our official journals as schismatics ? Is there no law, no justice for us in the church, which is the " Mother of us all ?" Is it nothing to you that some of the men who are thus proscribed were in the church before some of their persecutors were born ? Is it nothing for our opposers to consider, that God is now most wonderfully pouring out his Holy Spirit upon those Conferences where abolition abounds, and where abolition measures have been the most rife for two or three years past ? Is it nothing, that among the abolitionists there are many members and ministers who are among the oldest and most useful in the Methodist E. Church ? And is it nothing that such as these should be **MISREPRESENTED, SLIGHTED, and PROSCRIBED** ? Where, O where is the spirit of Christianity ? Where is the genius of Methodism ? Where that yearning of bowels, that forbearance, that courtesy and kindness, for which Methodist Ministers and members were once so well known ! Alas ! where !